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X-MEN

BOOK THREE:
MEN & X-MEN



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CHRIS CLAREMONT • SEAN CHEN

PREVIOUSLY...

IT ALL BEGAN WITH A
MAN AND HIS DREAM.

IN MY DESK I HAVE A SPEECH BY
ROBERT KENNEDY, QUOTED AT HIS
FUNERAL BY HIS BROTHER, TED.

THEY'RE WORDS I'VE TRIED
TO LIVE BY, AS MUCH AS ANY,
THEY ENCAPSULATE THE DREAM OF
PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER
AND WHY THE X-MEN CAME TO BE.

"WE CAN PERHAPS REMEMBER--EVEN IF
ONLY FOR A TIME--THAT THOSE WHO LIVE
WITH US ARE OUR BROTHERS; THAT THEY
SHARE WITH US THE SAME SHORT MOMENT
OF LIFE; THAT THEY SEEK--AS WE DO--
NOTHING BUT THE CHANCE TO LIVE OUT
THEIR LIVES IN PURPOSE AND HAPPINESS,
WINNING WHAT SATISFACTION AND
FULFILLMENT THEY CAN.

"SURELY THIS BOND OF COMMON FAITH,
THIS BOND OF COMMON GOAL, CAN BEGIN
TO TEACH US SOMETHING..."

WOLVERINE.
(LOGAN)

PSYLOCKE.
(ELISABETH BRAVOOOCK)



IN THOSE DARKEST DAYS OF THE
X-MEN'S HISTORY, THE WORDS HAD
LOST MUCH OF THEIR MEANING, THE
LESSON THEY OFFERED SEEMED
MERCILESS AND CRUEL, OUR
COLLECTIVE FUTURE BLEAK.

THE RETURN OF PHOENIX HAD PROVOKED
PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKES BY SOME OF THE
TEAM'S GREATEST ADVERSARIES. THE
XAVIER INSTITUTE HAD BEEN DESTROYED,
WITH HORRENDOUS CASUALTIES TO BOTH THE
STUPID BODY AND THE X-MEN THEMSELVES.
WE ALL KNEW THAT WAS JUST THE BEGINNING.

HOW IT WOULD END, WE
COULD ONLY HOPE.

BUT ONE OF THOSE ADVERSARIES--
SINISTER--WAS DEAD, AND BOTH XAVIER
AND CYCLOPS WERE PREPARING TO TAKE
THE BATTLE HOME TO THE OTHER.

Frank PRESENTS
X-MEN: THE END
BOOK III
The Grand Alliance



CYCLOPS
(SCOTT SUMMERS)

BY
CHRIS CLAREMONT
& **SEAN CHEN**

SANDU FLOREA INKS
AVALON'S IAN HANNIN
COLORS

DAVE SHARPE LETTERS
SCHMIDT, SITTERSON & LAZER
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TOM BREVDORT EDITOR
JOE QUESADA EDITOR IN CHIEF
DAN BUCKLEY PUBLISHER

PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER



STORM
(ORORO MUNROE)



CHARLES, AS ALWAYS,
SPOKE TO THE BEST IN THE
"HUMAN" CONDITION. AND
AS ALWAYS, HE WAS PRETTY
MUCH THE LONE VOICE.



SAGE

SHADOWCAT
(KITTY PRYDE)



I INTEND
TO TRAVEL
TO THE SHI'AR
THRONEWORLD,
CHANDILAR--

--TO
TRY TO EFFECT
SOME PEACEFUL
RESOLUTION TO
THIS CONFLICT.

⊗ THE XAVIER INSTITUTE
SALEM CENTER, NEW YORK

WITH ALL DUE
RESPECT, CHARLES,
LILANDRA'S TURNED
THIS SCHOOL INTO
A BONEYARD.

WE'RE
WAY PAST
TALKING.

⊗ HAMMER BAY, GENOSHA

IF YOU TRULY
BELIEVE THAT, ANY OF
YOU, THEN YOU HAVE
MY PROFOUNDTEST
APOLOGIES.

I'VE FAILED
AS YOUR TEACHER.

REMEMBER
THOUGH, WARSKRULLS
WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR
THESE ATTACKS.

WE'VE NO
DIRECT EVIDENCE
LINKING THEM TO
LILANDRA.

⊗ XSE HEADQUARTERS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

WHICH OF
COURSE IS HOW
ANY RESPECTABLE
CLAMPSTONE
OPERATION WOULD
BE ARRANGED...

...TO ENSURE
THOSE TRULY
RESPONSIBLE
REMAIN BLAME-
LESS.

WHOEVER OUR
ADVERSARIES, CHARLES,
THEY'VE MADE PLAIN THEY
WANT US DEAD.

IN THIS I AGREE
WITH SCOTT. A DIPLOMATIC
RESOLUTION IS NO LONGER
AN OPTION.

ALL THE MORE
REASON TO MAKE
ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN
WE STRIKE THE
PROPER TARGET.

SUPPOSE THE INTENT
HERE IS TO PROVOKE US
TO RETALIATE AGAINST
LILANDRA? TO DISCREDIT
THE X-MEN? TO IMPERIL
THE EARTH ITSELF?

CAN WE
AFFORD THAT
RISK?



HATE TO SAY IT, SCOTT, BUT IN THIS I'M WITH CHARLES.



PROFESSOR, YOU'RE TRAVELING TO ANOTHER GALAXY. IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG--!



MAGNETO AND I CAN TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES, SCOTT.

OUR REPUTATION ALONE SHOULD INSPIRE A MEASURE OF CAUTION AMONG OUR ENEMIES.



ON THAT BASIS ALONE, I'D BE INCLINED TO SHOOT FIRST--

--BUT, HEY, THAT'S JUST ME!



POINT TAKEN, ROBERT. BUT WE WON'T BE ENTIRELY WITHOUT ASSETS.

THE STAR-JAMMER IS EN ROUTE TO CHANDLER, WHICH PUTS PHOENIX BY OUR SIDE.



IN ADDITION, GAMBIT, CABLE AND MARVEL GIRL HAVE BEEN TRANSPORTED THERE AS WELL, WITH GAMBIT MASQUERADING AS SINISTER.

SCOTT, LILANDRA WAS OUR FRIEND. I LOVED HER, I WAS HER CONSORT.



FOR THOSE REASONS--AND MORE--I HAVE TO TRY THINGS THIS WAY.

BY THE SAME TOKEN, IF I'M WRONG, IF THE WORST HAPPENS--!

WE'LL BE READY, SIR.



GAMBIT IS
SINISTER'S
CLONE?

SURE DIDN'T
SEE THAT ONE
COMING.

IT EXPLAINS
MUCH ABOUT HIS
ACTIONS OVER
THE YEARS, AND
SINISTER'S.

TOTALLY
SUCKS ABOUT
ROGUE.

WE'VE HAD
CASUALTIES
BEFORE.

DOESN'T
MAKE THINGS
ANY EASIER,
SAGE.

'SPECIALLY
WITH KIDS
INVOLVED.



WHAT THE
HELL WAS GAMBIT
THINKING, LEAVING
THEM LIKE THAT?



PERHAPS THIS WAY, HE
ENSURES THEY AT LEAST
HAVE A FUTURE.



DO THEY,
SAGE? DO
WE?

WE'RE X-MEN,
WOMAN. SITCH LIKE
THIS, IT'S ALWAYS
GOTTA BE A
TRAP.



THAT
MERELY STATES
THE OBVIOUS,
ROBERT.

WHAT
CONCERNS
ME IS THAT I
CAN'T YET SEE
BEYOND.





MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE INSTITUTE...

...HUB
RETURNED WITH
THE KIDNAPPED
CHILDREN AND
MYSTIQUE...

THANK GOD
YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.
YOU'RE SAFE. I WAS
SO SCARED--!

DADDY, WHERE'S
MOMMY? WHY ISN'T
SHE HERE, IS SHE
ALL RIGHT?

SHE WAS
HURT, KIDS, BUT
SHE'S GETTING
BETTER.

I'LL TAKE YOU TO
SEE HER, THAT'LL
BE THE BEST
MEDICINE
EVER.

DADDY--
WHAT ABOUT
OLIVIER AND
BEKKA?

I KNOW HOW
HARD THIS IS. I KNOW
PART OF YOU WANTS
TO BE BRAVE.

BUT MOSTLY, YOU
WANT TO SCREAM AND
RAGE AND BEAT UP ON
GOD HIMSELF.

I KNOW WHAT I'M
SAYING SEEMS LIKE
THE WORDS FOLKS ARE
SUPPOSED TO SAY AT
TIMES LIKE THIS.

BUT I'VE STOOD
WHERE YOU STAND.
I'VE LOST WHAT
YOU'VE LOST.

IF YOU EVER
NEED A HAND TO
HOLD--OR ANY-
THING--

BRING THEIR
FATHER HOME
SAFE, SCOTT.
THAT'S ALL.

UNTIL THEN--I'M
THEIR GRANDMOTHER.
I'LL CARE FOR THEM AS
ANNA WOULD.

...A LITTLE PAST
7 A.M. ON A LOVELY
NOVEMBER
MORNING.

POLLS HAVE
JUST OPENED ON
THE TIGHTEN
MUNICIPAL ELECTION
IN MEMORY.

BELLES
OF
HELL

TURN THAT OFF,
SOMEONE, BEFORE
I GO TOTALLY
POSTAL!

ELEC
CHICAGO

PRYDE

OTI CO

WE'VE GOT
A FULL DAY AHEAD
OF US, PEOPLE.

LET'S REVIEW OUR
ASSIGNMENTS.

NOVEMBER
PRYDE

HULLO,
CHARLES.

HOW'S
IT GOING,
KITTY?

IT ALL COMES DOWN TO WHETHER
OR NOT POLKS WILL TRULY THEIR
FUTURE TO A MUTANT.

I HAVE
FAITH.

RATHER
HAVE YOUR
VOTE.

YOU REALLY
BELIEVE PEOPLE ARE
SO AFRAID?

PICK YOUR POLL.
PICK YOUR WINNER.
THE NUMBERS
CHANGE WITH EVERY
SAMPLE.

ASK ME AFTER
THE BALLOTS
ARE COUNTED.



THING IS, YOU AND ME, WE PRETTY MUCH **BOOKED** THE REASON PEOPLE ARE SPOOKED.

YOU READ PEOPLE'S MINDS AND I WALK THROUGH WALLS.



BETWEEN THE PAIR OF US, **NOTHING IS SECRET.** ARE YOU SURE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING?

YOU MEAN, AM I SURE IT WILL WORK?

ASK ME AFTER THE VOTES ARE COUNTED.



IT'S A CALCULATED RISK. LILANDRA'S ONLY KNOWN ME AS THE TEACHER, THE HEALER. SHE HAS NO IDEA WHAT CAME BEFORE. NEITHER, I PRAY, DOES OUR TRUE ADVERSARY.

I'M NOT LAUGHING.

THAT SHOULD GIVE ME A CRITICAL EDGE.



AS A TARGET, I'M HOPING I PROVE IRRESISTIBLE.

NOT TO MENTION, MODEST.

I'M QUITE CAPABLE OF DEALING WITH ANY REASONABLE THREAT.

AND THE UN-REASONABLE?

THAT'S WHERE SCOTT COMES IN.

YOU'RE PREPARED TO SACRIFICE THE X-MEN?

THIS
IS WHAT'S
AT STAKE,
KITTY.

IN MY PLACE,
WOULD YOU DECIDE
DIFFERENTLY?

...

NO.

GOOD. YOU
MAY YET AMOUNT
TO SOMETHING.

WHAT,
NOW YOU'RE
CHANNELING
EMMA?

SHE HAD
HER HAND IN
SHAPING YOU,
KITTY, AS DID
LOGAN AND
ORORO AND I.

WE HAVE OUR
PARTS TO PLAY
IN THIS FINAL
ADVENTURE.
YOU HAVE
YOURS IN
WHAT'S TO
FOLLOW.

IT'S NOT
FAIR.

IT'S
LIFE.

FOR MYSELF,
THOUGH--WHO BETTER
TO CARRY ON MY LEGACY,
AND FULFILL MY DREAM?

PROFESSOR--I
TAKE BACK WHAT I SAID
YEARS AGO. I NEVER
THOUGHT YOU WERE
A JERK.

AND YOU, MY
CHILD, WHILE YOU
MAY HAVE BEEN
BORN TO BE AN
X-MAN...

...ARE
DESTINED, I
TRULY BELIEVE,
FOR SO MUCH
MORE.

AS I SAID, BACK AT THE BEGINNING, THIS ISN'T JUST ABOUT THE X-MEN.

THERE'S ALSO THE SH'AR.

RULERS OF AN EMPIRE THAT SPANS AN ENTIRE GALAXY.

BEFORE JEAN GREY REACHED OUT ACROSS THE INFINITE AND BECAME ONE WITH THE PHOENIX...

...CHARLES XAVIER HAD A CELESTIAL MOMENT OF HIS OWN, WHEN HIS TELEPATHY ESTABLISHED A LIFETIME BOND WITH LILANDRA NERAMANI, PRINCESS OF THE AERIE, FROM THAT MOMENT OF FIRST CONTACT, IT WAS LOVE.

SHE WAS A RENEGADE IN THOSE DAYS, WITH THE AID OF XAVIER AND THE X-MEN SHE BECAME EMPRESS. TOGETHER, THEY SAVED THE UNIVERSE.

FOR A TIME HE WAS HER CONSORT.

FATE EVENTUALLY DREW HIM BACK TO EARTH AND AFTER A TIME THE RELATIONSHIP FOUNDERED. THEY HADN'T SPOKEN IN OVER TEN YEARS.

AND NOW IT APPEARED SHE MAY HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE TERRIBLE ATTACKS, ALLIED WITH SINISTER HIMSELF.



OR NOT. THAT'S WHAT GAMBIT
(MASQUERADING AS SINISTER
AND BLAZING THE TRAIL FOR
XAVIER) INTENDS TO DETERMINE.

WHAT KIND OF
RECEPTION IS
THIS, MY LORD
CHANCELLOR--

--TO ONE WHO
CONSIDERS HIMSELF
YOUR FRIEND?



I HAVE
NO FRIENDS,
SINISTER.

ONLY
THOSE WHO
SERVE ME.



ONE
SUCH WAS
SHAITAN.

WHERE IS MY
CHAMPION?

SLAIN.

WRONG
ANSWER.

YOU'LL
GET NONE
BETTER.

IN BATTLE THERE
ARE CASUALTIES.
ROGUE KILLED
HER.

I KILLED
ROGUE.



WITH THE
VERY BLADE I
HOLD AT YOUR
THROAT.

THINK
YOU'LL LIVE
TO USE IT?



THAT RISK,
LORD, APPEARS
SHARED.

WHY
SHOULD
I BELIEVE
YOU?

ONE,
I SPEAK
TRUTH.



TWO, I
CAN STILL BE
USEFUL.

WE
SHALL
SEE.

AT THE SAME TIME,
APPROACHING FROM
THE FRONTIER...



"CAN'T CODES
BE FAKED?"

"LEGALLY, AMONG
THE SH'AR, ONLY
THE MONARCH
HAS THE RIGHT TO
CONDEMN HER."

"THESE ARE BASED
ON HER GENOME."

"HER MOTHER,
DEATHBIRD, WAS
THE ABER'S CROWN
PRINCESS."

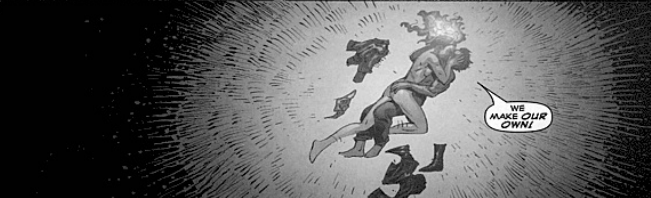
"AND, OF COURSE,
EVERYONE PLAYS
BY THE RULES."

"ALIYAH MAY
BE YOUNG, BUT
SHE'S GOT GREAT
INSTINCTS.
WE FOLLOW
HER LEAD..."

"XAVIER NEEDS
BACKUP, KURT, AND
PHOENIX IS THE
BIGGEST GUN IN
OUR ARSENAL."

"...WE'LL
BE FINE."







I HAVEN'T FELT THIS GREAT IN AGES!

I'M AFRAID IT'S ONLY IN YOUR MIND.



WITH MY HEALING FACTOR, NOT FOR LONG.

I SHOULD BE WITH CHARLEY. CAN YOU SEND ME TO HIM?

NO.

IT'S YOUR STRENGTH THAT SUSTAINS THIS LINK, LOGAN, YOUR PASSION THAT ANCHORS ME HERE.



RIGHT NOW, IN TERMS OF POWER, I'M STILL MORE GHOST THAN NOT.



IZZAT WHAT THE BAD GUYS ARE COUNTIN' ON?

YUP!



THEIR FUNERAL!
THAT'S MY LOGAN!

SNIKT!



I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU.

NEVER GONNA HAPPEN.

THAT'S JEAN'S DREAM.



JEAN'S REALITY, BECAUSE YOU'RE JEAN.

LOGAN, I'M PHOENIX!



I'M THE
ALPHA AND
THE OMEGA,
LOGAN.

THE SPARK THAT
IGNITES CREATION,
THE FINAL FIRE THAT
CONSUMES ALL TO
BEGIN ANEW.



SO
WHAT?

CAN'T HAVE
THAT PASSION,
OR CREATION,
IF YOU'RE NOT
ALIVE.

IF WE ALL
CARRY WITHIN US
THAT FLASH OF DIVINITY,
STANDS TO REASON DIVINITY
HAS TO EMBRACE THAT
SELFSAME SPARK
OF HUMANITY.



JEAN IS
PHOENIX.
PHOENIX IS
JEAN.

I
HATE
IT.

WHAT'S THE
DEAL HERE, RED?
YOU TRYIN' ONE LAST
TIME 'T DITCH YOUR
MORTALITY?



YES.



NO!



YOU'RE JEAN,
DARLIN'. YOU'LL
ALWAYS BE JEAN,
YOU HAVE TO
BE JEAN.

BEING HUMAN
IS WHAT GIVES YOU
PERSPECTIVE. IT'S
WHERE YOU FIND
HOPE.



AND
FEAR.

HUMANITY
COMES WITH
BAGGAGE,
LOGAN.

PASSION
IS FIERCE, IT
ISN'T ALWAYS
BENEVOLENT.



YOU HAVE TO
REMEMBER WHERE
YOU CAME FROM, TO
SHOW US ALL WHERE
TO GO.

OTHERWISE,
WHAT'S THE
POINT?



AND IN THE
END, WHEN I'M
THE ONLY ONE
LEFT?

YOU
WON'T
BE.



WHAT, YOU
PLAN TO LIVE
FOREVER?

FOR
YOU, JEAN--
ABSOLUTELY!



YOU ARE
TOTALLY
MAD.



YOU ARE
TOTALLY
WORTH
IT.



I'LL
BE BACK,
LOGAN.

I'LL BE
HERE.



WHEN I WAS YOUNG, AND SOMEWHAT FOOLISH, AND FEELING TOTALLY OUTCAST FROM THE WORLD...

...I USED TO WONDER IF THERE WERE OTHERS LIKE ME... AND DREAM ABOUT THE FUTURE WE MIGHT CREATE.

THEN, I ACTUALLY ENCOUNTERED SOME, AND ASPECTS OF THAT DREAM TURNED OUT NOT TO BE SO... PLEASANT.



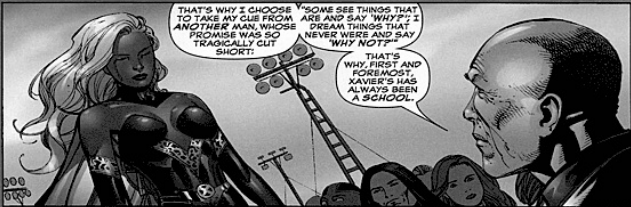
AS WITH EVERY ERA IN HUMAN HISTORY--PERHAPS EVEN NATURAL HISTORY--GOOD SEEMS EVER BALANCED BY EVIL. THE HIGHER AND MORE GLORIOUS THE SUMMIT WE STRIVE FOR, THE GREATER AND MORE HUNGRY THE ABYSS THAT WE LEAVE BEHIND.



THAT'S WHY I CHOOSE TO TAKE MY CUE FROM ANOTHER MAN, WHOSE PROMISE WAS SO TRAGICALLY CUT SHORT:

"SOME SEE THINGS THAT ARE AND SAY 'WHY?'; I DREAM THINGS THAT NEVER WERE AND SAY 'WHY NOT?'"

THAT'S WHY, FIRST AND FOREMOST, XAVIER'S HAS ALWAYS BEEN A SCHOOL.



"WHILE THE X-MEN HAVE ALWAYS EXISTED TO PROTECT US FROM THOSE WHO DWELL IN THE ABYSS, THE SCHOOL IS EVER FOCUSED ON THAT SUMMIT."

"WHY HUMANITY IS FRACTURED, I DO NOT KNOW--WHY SOME OF US HAVE ENHANCED GENES AND OTHERS NOT--BUT THAT SHOULD NOT, MUST NOT MATTER..."

"...FOR FUNDAMENTALLY WE ALL COME FROM THE SAME STOCK."

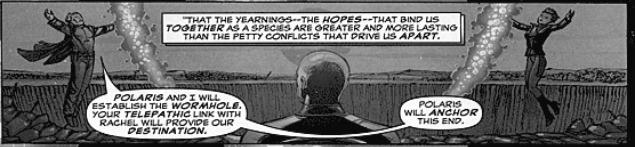
"WE ARE BORN OF THIS WORLD, COMPOSED OF THE SAME RAW MATERIALS AS THE COSMOS ITSELF. A POTENTIALLY MAGNIFICENT FAMILY OF SENTIENT BEINGS."

"WE FIGHT BECAUSE WE MUST, THAT IS REALITY."

"BUT WHY WE FIGHT MUST NEVER BE FORGOTTEN."

"I HAVE A PSIFLASH FROM RACHEL GAMBIT'S TEAM HAS ARRIVED."

"THEN IT'S TIME."



"THAT THE YEARNINGS--THE HOPES--THAT BIND US TOGETHER AS A SPECIES ARE GREATER AND MORE LASTING THAN THE PETTY CONFLICTS THAT DRIVE US APART."

POLARIS AND I WILL ESTABLISH THE WORMHOLE. YOUR TELEPATHIC LINK WITH RACHEL WILL PROVIDE OUR DESTINATION.

POLARIS WILL ANCHOR THIS END.

"THAT WE ARE BROTHERS AND SISTERS, PARENTS AND CHILDREN."

DON'T SEEM RIGHT, DOING THIS WITHOUT THE WOLVERINE.



HE CAN'T HOG ALL THE FUN.

"THAT IS MY DREAM, FROM MY HEART AND FROM MY SOUL, I THANK YOU ALL--AS THIS SCHOOL AND AS THE X-MEN--FOR HELPING ME TRY SO HARD TO MAKE IT REALITY."



"AND ULTIMATELY, THE CHARACTER OF A PERSON, AND THE DEEDS THAT FLOW FROM IT, MUST MATTER MORE THAN THE COLOR OF THEIR SKIN, OR THE STRUCTURE OF THEIR GENOME."



TELL ME, OLD FRIEND...

...IS THIS
PART OF YOUR
PLAN?



PERHAPS
WE SHOULD
HAVE INVITED
WOLVERINE,
AFTER ALL.

ANY MORE
BRIGHT IDEAS,
THEN?

ASIDE FROM
THE ONE THAT
BROUGHT US
HERE?

AS A
MATTER OF
FACT--

--ARIN'N
SEGURA--
MEJAH'LIN!



LORD CHANCELLOR--
XAVIER CALLS FOR THE SAFE-
CONDUCT OF EMBASSIES
PLENIPOTENTIARY.

IN HONOR,
WE MUST
ACCEDE--!





THE X-MEN
ARE BLOOD
ENEMIES OF
THE ABERIE.

HIS CLAIM
OF HONOR IS
DENIED.

HIS LIFE IS
FORFEIT.



IN THE
NAME OF THE
MAJESTRIX
SH'AR--

**KILL
THEM!**



NO!

IMPERIAL
GUARD, KEEP YOUR
EMPRESS--

**STAND
DOWN!**

NEXT:

CLOSING THE RING!

MARVEL HEROES HOT SPOT

TOM SEZ

It seems to me that the comics industry has fallen down in one respect of late: and that's in communicating directly with you, our valued readers. So we in the so-called Marvel Heroes editorial office have decided to take a stab at changing that. You've already seen letters pages return to a number of Marvel titles (not all of them mine), and there are more on the way, assuming we can eke out the time to put them together. Beyond that, I know there are some plans over at Marvel.com for some nifty new features—and there's also Joe Q's weekly Friday column over at Newsarama.com.

But now and then this page, which is an experiment in going back to the classics. Part Bulletin, part letters page, part something else, we in the Brevort editorial office want to make it your one-stop shopping location for information and insight into what's coming up in our little line of books. We'll be attempting to run our little line in this in any of our titles that doesn't have a letters page of its own. It'll be a place for us to mouth off to you, you to mouth off to us, and hopefully for everybody to have a good time. It's really easy for this sort of thing to fall into empty hype, though, so this is where we'll need your help. If you've got something you want to say, or a question you want to ask that's more universal than any one title, you can send it to me at mhheroes@marvel.com, and I'll try to address it in the months that come.

But like I said, this is an experiment. I honestly don't know whether the time and the need for this kind of a page may be past. But I look at the popularity of the letters pages in books like *Powers* and *Invisible*, where you get to parlay directly with the folks writing those books, and I figure there must be something to it. So it's up to you—if we don't get any sort of response to this page, we'll likely move on to something else.

And for those who might desire even more direct contact, I maintain two active throw-folks online, one at Comixfan.com and the other at JoeQuesada.com. I try to check in there at least once a week, so feel free to swing by and chat a bit.

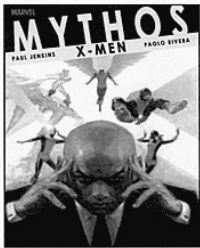
Next month, I'll take a stab at filling this space with actual content! See you then!

Tom B

ITEM! Wizard Magazine recently released their End-Of-The-Year review, and named CAPTAIN AMERICA their pick for book of the year! While this'll come as no surprise to those who've checked out the Winter Soldier storyline that Ed Brubaker and Steve Epting have been producing, we hate to see any culture lover miss out on what's being described as perhaps the best CAP run in recent memory! Likewise, YOUNG AVENGERS creator Allan Heinberg received accolades as breakout new talent of the year (as much as any guy who's written for *Sex and the City* and *The OC* can be considered a new talent). And here's a special shout-out to our old friend Geoff Johns, who managed to snag the Man of the Year spot for his work for the guys up there. Enjoy it while you can, Geoff—we'll get ya next year!

ITEM! NEW AVENGERS author Brian Michael Bendis is recently set his very own press as for a year in favor of a lei, as he and his charming wife Aldis journeyed to Hawaii, where the couple renewed their wedding vows following ten years of marital bliss. (And before some wise guy pipes up, no, it wasn't

two years of bliss that Bendis padded out into ten.) Also attending was Marvel's own EIC Joe Quesada, who surprised all by staying awake all the way to the end of the ceremony! Here's a toast to the happy couple—and many more!



ITEM! Remember that cool, heartfelt painted issue of SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN we put out about a year back? Well, the creative partners behind that special issue, Paul Jenkins and Paolo Rivera, have reunited for a series of painted stand-alone specials each focusing on a different luminary in the Marvel line of stars! The first one, MYTHOS: X-MEN, comes out this month, and spotlights the earliest days of the X-Men. Paul and Paolo are already hard at work on entries featuring the Hulk and Ghost Rider, which'll be released every three or four months or so. So if what you're looking for is a sophisticated, stylish examination of just what makes the X-Men who they are, you could do worse than to flip through MYTHOS: X-MEN when it ships this month.

ITEM! Associate Editor Andy Schmidt has had his head in the clouds lately. He's been gazing skyward, and falling into an almost hypnotic daze. We were just about ready to fire him for slacking off when he revealed what was actually going on—he's been brainstorming with Keith Giffen about a mammoth project designed to reinvigorate many of Marvel's cosmic characters! All we can tell you right now is that it's called ANNIHILATION, and it'll be rolling your way across the cosmos the last week in March! So watch the skies!

ITEM! We can't reveal too much about it yet, but Mark Millar and Steve McNiven are putting together what will inevitably be the can't-miss Marvel U project of 2006. About all we can say at this point is—"Whose Side Are You On?" Stay tuned for further updates!

MEET YOUR EDITORIAL CREW! Tom Brevort owns a vintage 1970s comic book spinner rack that's set up in his den. "Professor" Andy Schmidt has been teaching a course at the Museum of Comics and Cartoon Art on writing for comics. Molly Lazer recently performed live on stage with American Idol's Clay Aiken in his NYC holiday show. Aubrey Sitterson hasn't yet done anything worth mentioning, but he's young and we have high hopes for him!

ON SALE
JANUARY 2006

BOOKS OF DOOM #3: Victor Von Doom, now a broken man, flees to Eastern Europe... and love is not the only thing that follows him there...

CAPTAIN AMERICA #14: The final showdown between Cap and the Winter Soldier!

FANTASTIC FOUR #534: Hulk vs. Thing: Raw!

FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD SPIDER-MAN #4: The Other, Part 10: the newest chapter in Spider-Man's life starts right here!

IRON MAN #5: For Tony Stark, the future of his career as Iron Man may depend on him revisiting his past...

IRON MAN: INEVITABLE #2: The Spymaster makes his first move—which means it's the armored Avenger vs. the Ghost!

MARVEL TEAM-UP #16: The League of Losers take on Chronon, but when will our heroes end up?

MYTHOS: X-MEN: The first clash between the X-Men and Magneto in full painted color!

NEW THUNDERBOLTS #17: The identity of the new Swordsman is revealed!

NEW AVENGERS #15: The time has come for the New Avengers to go public. Who will stand and declare themselves a New Avenger?

PULSE #13: The moment has arrived—Jessica Jones finally gives birth!

SENTINEL #3: Big robot smackdown!

SENTRY #5: The Sentry's psychiatrist must stop the most dangerous being on earth—but is that the Void? Or the Sentry himself?

SHE-HULK #4: Jen returns to Bone, Idaho to face the destruction caused by She-Hulk. But what danger awaits her in this sleepy little town?

SON OF M #2: A strange fate waits for Quicksilver as he is taken to Attilan by his estranged wife, Crystal.

SPIDER-GIRL #94: Guest-starring Hawkeye, Scarlet Witch, and Ant-Man! What will Spider-Girl do now that she's seen a vision of her own death?

SPIDER-MAN UNLIMITED #13: Our favorite arachnid gets a bug, and the Rhino super-sizes it at a local fast-food joint.

SPIDER-WOMAN: ORIGIN #2: Young Jessica Drew's life takes a scary turn as she joins the shadowy terrorist organization Hydra!

THE THING #3: More fun and games at the deadliest place on earth!

X-FACTOR #3: An assassin has targeted a member of X-Factor. Who?

X-MEN: THE END-MEN & X-MEN #1: It's the endgame for the X-Men of the future!

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